

FINAL PROPOSED RESOLUTION

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RESOLUTION NO. _____

A RESOLUTION PROVIDING DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE TULSA CITY COUNCIL; RECOGNIZING THE FINDINGS CONTAINED IN THE 1921 TULSA RACE RIOT COMMISSION REPORT; RECOGNIZING A HISTORY OF DISCRIMINATION SUFFERED BY BLACK AMERICANS IN THE UNITED STATES; RECOGNIZING FINDINGS CONTAINED IN THE CITY'S EQUALITY INDICATOR REPORTS ESTABLISHING THAT THERE ARE SIGNIFICANT DISPARITIES BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE TULSANS; STATING MEMBERS' APOLOGIES FOR ACTIONS PERPETRATED BY OTHERS DURING THE 1921 TULSA RACE MASSACRE AND SUBSEQUENT SEGREGATION, AND DISCRIMINATORY PRACTICES; CALLING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMUNITY-LED PROCESS TO EVALUATE THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RECONCILIATION MADE IN THE COMMISSION'S AND OTHER REPORTS; SUPPORTING THE MISSION OF THE MAYOR'S OFFICE OF RESILIENCE AND EQUITY, THE GREATER TULSA AFRICAN-AMERICAN AFFAIRS COMMISSION, THE TULSA AUTHORITY FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS; URGING ENTITIES IN TULSA THAT HAVE ADVANCED AND BENEFITTED FROM RACIAL INEQUITY TO JOIN THE CITY IN ITS APOLOGIES; PLEDGING TRANSPARENCY IN REPORTING PROGRESS ON THE CONTENTS OF THIS RESOLUTION; AND DECLARING AN EMERGENCY.

WHEREAS, on May 31 and June 1, 1921, "the single worst incident of racial violence in American history" occurred in and on the people of the Greenwood District of Tulsa, Oklahoma; and

WHEREAS, after decades passed without historical documentation effectively erasing this event from Tulsans' collective memories, the State of Oklahoma established the 1921 Tulsa Race Riot Commission (Commission) to study this event which today is known as the "Tulsa Race Massacre," develop a historical record, and produce a report with findings and recommendations for reconciliation; and

WHEREAS, the Commission report found that amidst a climate of White racial hostility and resentment resulting from Black economic success, reports on the morning of May 30, 1921, of an alleged, disputed incident between a Black man and White woman caused a significant number of Tulsa's White community, and the Tulsa Tribune, to call for the accused Black man's lynching; and

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WHEREAS, on May 31, 1921, after a violent confrontation of White and Black Tulsans near the Tulsa courthouse and jail, an armed mob of White men descended upon the Greenwood District, one of the most prosperous Black communities in the United States and home to the nationally renowned entrepreneurial center known as “Black Wall Street”; and

WHEREAS, during the evening of May 31, through the afternoon of June 1, 1921, a White mob looted, damaged, burned, bombed, or otherwise destroyed 35-40 square blocks of the Greenwood District, including churches, schools, businesses, a hospital, a library, and an estimated 1,256 homes of Black residents, as well as virtually every other structure, leaving up to 300 dead and nearly 9,000 Black Tulsans homeless and, effectively, wiping away millions of dollars in Black prosperity and wealth; and

WHEREAS, no individuals of the White mob who participated in the violence ever faced prosecution or accountability for the lives lost, the wealth destroyed, and destruction of the Greenwood District by denying insurance claims, obstructing rebuilding, and blocking assistance to the victims, rather, a State grand jury “officially” placed responsibility for the violence on the Black community; and

WHEREAS, Jim Crow era segregation — established in Oklahoma with SB 1 in 1907 and in City of Tulsa’s Ordinance 1547 in 1916 — confined Tulsa, Oklahoma's Black residents to North Tulsa within the City's Greenwood District and throughout the decades since, Black Americans in the United States have historically been denied the right to vote, fair housing obstructed by financial institutions redlining Black areas such as North Tulsa, and a decent education by a “separate but equal” legal doctrine, to which the City of Tulsa has not been immune; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tulsa, along with its community partners, corporations, and philanthropic organizations, has begun to cultivate and repair relationships with Black Tulsans; and

WHEREAS, over the last few years the City of Tulsa, has embarked on a journey to bring reconciliation, provide justice, and seek the truth through several initiatives, including the 1921 Graves Investigation, an effort to reexamine potential graves identified in the 2001 State Commission Report; and

WHEREAS, while uncovering the past, the City proactively and intentionally engaged in a process to account for and document the present through the establishment and continuation of the Equality Indicators report which measures equality and tracks progress on six themes: economic opportunity, education, housing, justice, public health, and services in Tulsa; and

WHEREAS, the Equality Indicators reports continue to show significant disparities between Black and White Tulsans as well as between residents of North Tulsa as compared to other areas of Tulsa with regards to income, housing, arrest and use of force rates, life expectancy, and economic opportunity; and

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WHEREAS, the reestablishment of the Greenwood District/Black Wall Street as an economic generator for the North Tulsa Black community is vital toward returning businesses, residences and a historic sense of community to the area; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tulsa, along with its community partners has developed tools and created partnerships aimed at documenting and improving these and other historic inequalities from the past that stem from the racial prejudice so violently perpetrated by the Tulsa Race Massacre; and

WHEREAS, the City of Tulsa and its community partners must continue to build upon these efforts to understand the crippling individual and societal harms caused by this act of violence and other historic inequalities; continually and intentionally act to reconcile, restore, and unite; and, collectively with the community determine how to overcome these challenges together as Tulsans.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF TULSA THAT:

Section 1. Members of the Tulsa City Council:

- A.** Acknowledge, apologize, and commit to making tangible amends for the racially motivated acts of violence perpetrated against Black Tulsans in Greenwood in 1921; and
- B.** Apologize not only for those who perpetrated the Massacre but any enforcement of subsequent segregation, discriminatory practices and programs that led to inequities and commit to making tangible amends for policies and practices that have harmed or destroyed communities in North Tulsa; and
- C.** Will establish within the next six months a community-led process to evaluate the recommendations for reconciliation made in the Commission report, and other reports and efforts, and create short- and long-term recommendations to make significant progress toward restoring economic mobility, prosperity, and generational wealth for the 1921 Race Massacre survivors, their descendants, and residents of North Tulsa; and
- D.** Support the mission and work of the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Equity (MORE), the Greater Tulsa African American Affairs Commission (GTAAAC), the Tulsa Authority for Economic Opportunity (TAEO), and their supporting partners and will utilize their talents when forming policy and programs to establish the creation of generational wealth and address restoring the legacy of the Greenwood District's prosperity; and
- E.** Urge any and all entities in Tulsa to identify the ways they have advanced and benefitted from racial inequity and to join in their apologies and invites these entities to join in finding solutions, ensuring equity, and identifying policies and

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practices that cause inequities and seek solutions to comprehensively address these systems; and

- F. Will transparently report progress and outcomes on the contents of this resolution on a biannual basis to the citizens of Tulsa.

Section 2. Emergency Clause. That an emergency is now declared to exist for the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety and for this reason this resolution shall take effect immediately from and after its adoption by the Council and approval by the Mayor.

ADOPTED by the Council _____
Date

Chair of the Council

ADOPTED, as an emergency measure, on this 2nd day of June 2021.

DRAFT

Chair of the Council

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

Received by the Mayor: _____, at _____
Date Time

By: _____
Secretary

APPROVED by the Mayor of the City of Tulsa, Oklahoma: _____
Date

At _____
Time

Mayor

(Seal)

ATTEST:

City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

City Attorney

DRAFT